

## **CARES Monthly VISN Communication Report July 2002**

The first month's VISN-level CARES Communication Report is summarized on the attached spreadsheets. The first one contains the "Stakeholder Outreach" summary and the second the input or inquiries received from stakeholders and others.

In summary, there were an estimated **171,291 stakeholders and members of the public briefed on the CARES process**. However, not all VISNs included estimates of audience participants or persons reached by media reports. Therefore, the total number may be viewed as an under-estimate, since several VISNs did not report the number of individuals briefed or reached by their efforts. Briefings, Town Hall, e-mails, and other mailings (including newsletters) were the most common types of outreach used. Nevertheless, two VISNs (not counting VISN 12, which participated in Phase I of CARES) did not report any stakeholder outreach activities and three other VISNs reported two or less briefings. Thus, the majority of the briefings and outreach occurred in fifteen (15) VISNs. Likewise, briefing and/or discussions of CARES with certain categories of stakeholders have been limited to date (e.g., 7 VISNs reported discussions with or briefings of university affiliates, 7 reported union briefings, and 1 reported DoD briefings).

Input regarding the CARES process at this stage tended to be largely to be in response to the Associated Press articles, which announced the CARES rollout and appeared in early June. There have been only **828 VISN and facility level comments received through July 30, 2002**. For the most part, the contacts have been seeking information or asking questions about possible closures. In a few instances, organizations or individuals have offered their services (e.g., Blind Veterans Association). In only one VISN were the market designations and boundaries controversial – i.e., VISN 19, where stakeholders were accommodated by adjustment of submarket county assignments.

The process of receiving input was smooth, with all VISNs reporting electronically. However, several areas were identified that may benefit from improvement. The National CARES Program Office (NCPO) has recognized the need for a more standardized reporting process. An ACCESS database format is being developed by the NCPO. It is hoped that the database will be available by the end of September to facilitate reporting by the VISNs, compiling the national reports, and searching the database. In the interim, a standard Excel file template will be used for the VISN reports. In addition, at the VISN and facility levels, more aggressive outreach is needed in order to educate the stakeholders and the public about the CARES process and to seek their input at the various stages of the process.

August 23, 2002

**Summary by VISN  
CARES Stakeholder Outreach**

VISN	TYPE*	Employee	Veteran/Rel	Congressional	VSO	Affiliate	Volunteer	Union	Local Org	DoD	Other	Total	Comments	Response / Action / Impact on Plan
1	B, E,M,TH,O	21096	44115	247	432	40		3	36		7	<b>65,976</b>	Q/A only.	n/a
2	B, E,M,TH	3416	20	27			235	20			217	<b>3,935</b>		
3	B			1	1			1	1			<b>4</b>	CARES rollout including discussion of markets recommended	n/a
4	B,E,TH,M	10715			71	45					20,012	<b>30,843</b>		
5	n/a										1	<b>1</b>		
6	B,E,M,TH	2659	1100	9	267	2	40	4	2			<b>4,083</b>	no questions to 'wish to be kept informed'	n/a
7	B,E,M	10,132									25,710	<b>35,842</b>	media coverage included in estimate	n/a
8	B,M										1	<b>1</b>	ques from San Juan RE why PR & Virgin Islands shown on maps	V8 agreed to change map presentation in the future
9	n/a											<b>0</b>		
10	?	150										<b>150</b>	no comments	n/a
11	B,E,M,TH	750	65	82	379	164	65	19	1	0	38	<b>1,563</b>	multiple presentations	no significant questions raised
12	n/a											<b>0</b>		
15	B	425	46		362	35		4				<b>872</b>	no feedback	n/a
16	B,M	48.5		6	6			48.5		6		<b>115</b>	limited response/queries	
17	n/a											<b>0</b>	[only in response to AP story/media]	
18					1						1	<b>2</b>	Qtrly commanders' council	showed videotape/briefed on mkt areas
19	B,TH,M,V	363	1049	407	18	30						<b>1,867</b>	1) stkhldr concern about mkt boundaries; 2) too little time; 3) CARES fact sheets & newsltrs; 4) objection to closure Bldg 2 (overnt.housing for families of SI pts)	1) counties moved in submkts in final submission; 2) assured that input still possible; 3) explained process & "assured that chance of closure of facilities was slim"; 4) Fisher House Grant application.

**TYPE \*:**

FG = Focus Groups  
 TH = Town Hall  
 W = Website  
 M = Mailings  
 E = E-Mails  
 B = Briefing  
 O = Other

July 2002 Communications Report

Summary by VISN:  
CARES Stakeholder Input and Issues

VISN	Type of Input*	Employees	Veteran/Rel.	Congressional	VSO	Affiliate	Volunteer	Union	Other	Total	Comments
1	L,E	10	5	1					3	19	concern that facilities may close
2	n/a									0	
3	?				1					1	Request for information as to how Blind Veterans Assn can assist CARES -plan email response & provide POC
4	L,V,P		6	2	2				3	13	requests for information, brfng; concerns about possible closures
5	T								1	1	Tel. from local TV station in folup to AP report - ques. RE any VAMCs closing in Md
6	V,T			1	2				4	7	Requests for information
7	L, T, E							1	48	49	Issues: closing facilities? Why is VA doing this [CARES]?
8										0	
9	T								5	5	seeking info; folup AP story (media)
10										0	
11								1		1	Market analysis request.
12										0	
15	V	158			390				158	705	all seeking information
16					1					1	Blind Vet Assn-upset RE decisions being made w/o local input [ref'd to PAO-explained that early in process, input can be received]
17	E								14	14	Media contacts - folup AP story, news rel.
18										0	negative report
19	V,T	x	x		x			x	x	??	stakeholder concern about mkt boundaries
20								1		1	Walla Walla Union Bulletin: heard WW was losing money this yr bec. of CARES process
21	L										
22	L								2	2	1) concern that Long Beach would be taken over by LA; 2) offer of contract svcs
23	T,E	2	2		2				3	9	seeking info; folup AP story (media); facility commun.coord's disappointed about lack of ability to provide feedback on mkt definitions
	<b>Totals:</b>	170	13	4	398	0	0	3	241	828	

\*TYPE:

L-letter

E-e-mail

P-petition

T-telephone

V-visit(personal)

## CARES Stakeholder Issues

### Summary of Substantive Comments

Who	What They Said	Action Taken/ Impact on Plan